

REMARKS

Summary of the Final Office Action

Claim 4 stands objected to for an alleged informality.

Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Brotman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,236,967) (hereinafter "Brotman").

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicant has amended claims 1, 2, 4, 7 and 8, and added new claims 9-14, to differently describe embodiments of the disclosure of the instant application and/or to improve their form. Accordingly, claims 1-14 are currently pending for consideration.

Objection to the Claims

Claim 4 stands objected to for an alleged informality. Applicant has amended claim 4 to improve its form in accordance with the helpful suggestion provided by the Examiner at page 3, section 7 of the Final Office Action. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to claim 4 is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Brotman. Applicant has amended claims 1, 2, 7 and 8 to differently describe embodiments of the disclosure of the instant application. To the extent that these rejections might be deemed to apply to the claims as newly-amended, they are respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

The specification of the instant application explains how embodiments of the speech recognition systems and methodologies of the disclosure of the instant application can specify an

object word indicative of a single desired spot name even if a plurality of object words that are the same or similar to each other are recognized. When such a plurality of same or similar object words are recognized, the speech recognition apparatus automatically samples a limiting word for distinguishing between this plurality of object words. This limiting word is sampled from the spot information memory portion which stores information relative to spots. The information in the spot information memory portion is organized in a level structure.

For example, Fig. 12 of the instant application illustrates the contents of a spot information data table in which a number of object words (spot names) that are the same or similar to each other have been recognized. For example, two of these have the same spelling “OOURA-KOU” and the other has a spelling of “OURA-KOU.” The speech recognition systems and methodologies of embodiments of the instant application in this example will automatically sample a limiting word from the information in the spot information data table shown in Fig. 12 in order to distinguish between this plurality of object words that are either the same or similar to each other. The information in the spot information data table (for example, the GENRE, DETAILED GENRE, “TO-DOU-FU-KEN” NAME, and “SHI-KU-CHO-SON” NAME) is organized in a level structure as described, for example, at page 10, line 20 – page 13, line 8 and page 29, lines 1-20 of the instant application’s specification. See also Figs. 3 and 7 of the instant application’s disclosure.

As also described at these portions of the instant application’s disclosure, the limiting word is sampled from the spot information data table at the highest level of said level structure that is capable of uniquely determining an object word from the plurality of same or similar object words. Accordingly, in the arrangement shown in Fig. 12, for example, the apparatus will

first attempt to find a limiting word in the higher levels of information, such as “GENRE” and “DETAILED GENRE.” However, since the information in each of these respective columns in this example are the same, there is no possibility of distinguishing between the same or similar object words (spot names) from either the “GENRE” and “DETAILED GENRE” columns. Accordingly, the apparatus will select a limiting word from the next column in the level structure, namely the “TO-DOU-FU-KEN” NAME column in this example, in order to determine the desired object word (spot name) from the plurality of same or similar object words. Accordingly, in this example, the “TO-DOU-FU-KEN” NAME column is the highest level of the spot information’s level structure that is capable of uniquely determining an object word from the plurality of same or similar object words.

Such advantageous features of embodiments of the instant application have been added to independent claim 1 of the instant application. The applied Brotman reference includes no teaching, or even a suggestion, of such features such as organizing information in a spot information memory table in a level structure. Brotman also does not teach, or even suggest, distinguishing between a plurality of object words that are the same or similar to each other using a limiting word that is automatically sampled from the spot information memory table at the highest level of the level structure that is capable of uniquely determining an object word from a plurality of object words that are the same or similar to each other.

Similar features have also been added to the newly-amended remaining independent claims 2, 7 and 8. Accordingly, similar arguments also apply to these remaining newly-amended claims.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully asserts that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) should be withdrawn because Brotman does not teach or suggest each feature of independent claims 1, 2, 7 and 8, as newly-amended. As pointed out in MPEP § 2131, "[t]o anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim." Thus, "[a] claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. Of California, 2 USPQ 2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987)." Furthermore, Applicant respectfully asserts that dependent claims 3-6 are allowable at least because of their dependence from independent claim 1 or 2, and the reasons set forth above.

Newly-Added Claims

Applicant has added new claims 9-14 to differently describe embodiments of the disclosure of the instant application. These new claims include similar features as claims 1-6 discussed above. Accordingly, new claims 9-14 are allowable for similar reasons as discussed above with regard to claims 1-6.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully requests the entry of the Amendments to place the application in clear condition for allowance or, in the alternative, in better form for appeal. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative to expedite prosecution. A favorable action is awaited.

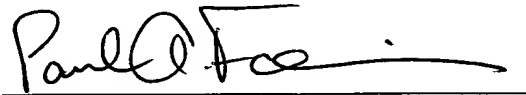
EXCEPT for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0573. This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

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